

REMARKS

In the Official Action mailed on **December 29, 2004** the Examiner reviewed claims 6-53. Claim 40 was objected to because of informalities. Claims 6-53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 6, 23, 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaplan et al. (USPN 5,594,816, hereinafter "Kaplan") in view of May et al. (USPN 5,844,627, hereinafter "May"). Claims 7-10, 12, 23-25, 32-35, 37, 48, and 49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Kaplan and May as applied in claims 6, 23 and 32 above, and further in view of Miyano (USPN 6,727,942, hereinafter "Miyano"). Claims 11, 13, 14, 26, 27, 36, 38, 39, and 50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Kaplan, May, and Miyano as applied above, and further in view of Gindele (USPN 6,681,054, hereinafter "Gindele"). Claims 15, 16, 21, 28, 40, 51, and 52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Kaplan, May, and Miyano as applied above, and further in view of Kokaram (USPN 5,500,685, hereinafter "Kokaram"). Claims 17, 30, 43, and 53 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

Objections to the claims

Claim 40 was objected to because of informalities.

Applicant has amended claim 40 to correct the informalities noted by the Examiner. The limitations of claim 40 have been included in claim 32, and claim 40 has been canceled (see below)

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claims 6-53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Applicant has amended claims 10, 13-14, 25, 27, 35, 38-39, and 50 to clarify the metes and bounds of these claims. Note that the Examiner cited claim 6 as including the term “about 7 regions.” Applicant could find no such term in claim 6.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 6, 23, and 32 were rejected as being unpatentable over Kaplan in view of May. Claim 48 was rejected as being unpatentable over the combination of Kaplan and May, and further in view of Miyano.

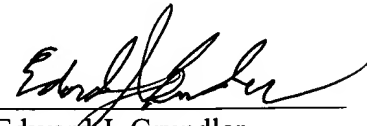
Applicant has amended independent claims 6, 23, 32, and 48 to include allowable limitations from dependent claims 17, 30, 43, and 53, respectively. Dependent claims 15, 17, 28, 30, 40, 43, 51, and 53 have been canceled without prejudice. Dependent claims 16, 29, 41-42, and 52 have been amended to correct antecedent basis.

Hence, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 6, 23, 32, and 48 as presently amended are in condition for allowance. Applicant also submits that claims 7-14, 16, and 18-22, which depend upon claim 6, claims 24-27, 29, and 31, which depend upon claim 23, claims 33-39, 41-42, and 44-46, which depend upon claim 32, and claims 49-50 and 52, which depend upon claim 48, are for the same reasons in condition for allowance and for reasons of the unique combinations recited in such claims.

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the present application is presently in form for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By 
Edward J. Grundler
Registration No. 47,615

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Edward J. Grundler
PARK, VAUGHAN & FLEMING LLP
2820 Fifth Street
Davis, CA 95616
Tel: (530) 759-1663
FAX: (530) 759-1665